**Tropical Splash Race and Safety Plan**

This document outlines the details about the race and safety plans for our 5K, 2.5K, and 1K open water race on Siesta Key, Florida. It contains the following:

* Race Plan
* Safety Plan
* Emergency Plan
* Contingency Plan
* Water Quality Plan

**RACE PLAN**

The Sarasota YMCA Sharks Masters will host the 16th Annual Tropical Splash Open water event. The date for the race at this time is May 13, 2018. The races will be offered at three distances 1K, 2.5K, and 5K with male and female divisions. All races will be held within a rectangular course in the Gulf of Mexico at Siesta Key Public Beach. Pre race meetings will be held on the beach and post race activities will be held at the nearby gazebo area. Water safety will be provided by Sarasota County Lifeguard Service. The race will be officiated by Florida Swimming local officials.

Safety personnel will be located on the beach and in the water. Water safety personnel will be using rescue boards, kayaks, and a jet ski. They will be positioned around the course in a method to provide adequate safety for swimmers as they move around the course. Safety personnel will be instructed on how to assist a distressed swimmer and trained medical personnel will be available to assist in emergency situations.

Swimmers will start the race on the beach and proceed into the water when the race starts. The start will be staggered to reduce the number of swimmers entering the water at one time. 2.5K and 5K swimmers will swim counterclockwise around a rectangular course marked with corner turn buoys and directional buoys between the turn buoys. The 2.5K swimmers will swim one lap around the course and the 5K swimmers will swim two laps around the course. The 1K swimmers will also start on the beach from the south end of the course and swim one-way north up the beach to the finish line. All swimmers in all races will finish in the same location crossing a finishing pad. The 5K swimmers will have a maximum of 2.5 hours to complete their swim. At that time, any swimmer who has not finished will be asked by course safety personnel to proceed to the beach and to the finish line to check in.

A timing chip system will be used on every swimmer to check them in at the start and record their finish. This provides an accounting system of each swimmer that entered the water and each swimmer that exited the water.

Prior to the race, a pre-race meeting will take place instructing each swimmer on the course layout, starting and finishing procedures, contingency plans, safety plans with instructions on how to ask for help on the course, and what to do if they abandon the race. A question and answer period is allotted so that each swimmer has the ability to get their questions answered. A course map will also be available for swimmers to view.

Each swimmer will be provided a colored swim cap based on their swimming distance and body marked with their swim number providing additional accountability means.

**SAFETY PLAN**

1. Emergency services will be provided by Sarasota County Lifeguard Service (SCLS), a USLA certified agency. All are certified First Responders and at least two are EMT's.
2. SCLS will have staff on duty as well as Sarasota YMCA lifeguards. Five will be on the swim course and two will be on shore. One or two jet skies will be on the course and other personnel will be on rescue boards.
3. An EMT equipped with Basic Life Support gear will be on the beach in case of an emergency.
4. The jet ski will have radio communication with on shore SCLS staff and the Race Director. Radio communication is directly linked to 911 services.
5. Sarasota County Fire Station #13 is located within the boundaries of Siesta Key Public Beach, the race venue, with full Emergency Services including ambulances. Response time would be 5 minutes or less.
6. Four to five hundred participants are expected. However, the race is contested in three distances 1K, 2.5K, and 5K. Most 1K swimmers will be finished in twenty minutes or less. After the 2.5K swimmers complete 1 loop around the rectangle they will be finished leaving approximately 150 swimmers completing the 5K. In past years, we have had approximately 15 additional support craft, mainly kayaks and feel that is an adequate number to monitor the course. Add in the 5 SCLS personnel and there will be around 20 craft on the course. There will also be a police power boat outside the course to keep any boat traffic away from the course. The three races will be staggered starts to avoid unnecessary crowding.
7. A distressed swimmer would be identified by support craft blowing a whistle until recognized. SCLS personnel on the jet ski should be on site in 10-20 seconds. The swimmer will be placed on the jet ski and transported to shore where resuscitation by trained personnel will begin if necessary.
8. A briefing of the course and conditions will be held on the beach prior to the swim. All participants will be checked in by crossing the electronic finish pad and entered into a holding area. They will be checked back in as they finish across the electronic finish pad. Swimmers that withdraw from the race will be instructed to report to the finish area to be accounted for. Contact information for all swimmers will be recorded as part of the registration process.
9. A safety briefing will be held for all safety personnel prior to the start of the race so that they understand how to handle a distressed swimmer and know where to be positioned on the course.

**EMERGENCY PLAN**

1. Swimmer in distress: Swimmers in distress will be identified by support craft. Support craft personnel will alert SCLS personnel on the jetski by blowing a whistle until recognized. If the swimmer must be evacuated from the course, they will be loaded on the jet ski and brought to shore. Once on shore, the swimmer will be evaluated and treated if necessary by SCLS personnel. Swimmers requiring evacuation via ambulance will be transported to Sarasota Memorial Hospital 5.67 miles from the race venue. Transit time is approximately 12 minutes.
2. Missing swimmer: Before the race begins, all swimmers will be checked in by crossing an electronic "finish pad" as they enter a holding area. They will be checked back in as they finish crossing the finish pad. Swimmers who abandon the race will be instructed to check in at the finish area by personnel on the beach. Cell phone number and emergency contact information will be gathered at registration for each swimmer. If a swimmer is determined missing, SCLS will follow protocol for said event.

**CONTINGENCY PLAN**

1. Any one of the following individuals is empowered to order the race to be abandoned due to unsafe conditions.

A. Event Referee - TBD

B. Race Director - David Miner

C. Safety Supervisor – Steve Butler

1. If the race is abandoned, Race Control will communicate via radio to all support craft to signal abandonment. Swimmers will be ordered to the beach.
2. Swimmers will be instructed to proceed to the finish area to check in.
3. If lightning is present in the area, all swimmers will be instructed to leave the beach immediately and move to the covered areas or their cars where check-in took place.

**WATER QUALITY**

Siesta Beach water quality is tested and posted on a weekly basis by the Florida Department of Health. I have attached a sample of the post that is provided. In the rare instance that the water quality was poor, the beach is generally closed to swimmers.

The average water temperature at Siesta Beach for the period of Tropical Splash is 78 to 84 degrees F.

**RACE COURSE MAP**

